



NEWS RELEASE

Office of Majority Leader

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Majority Leader Steve Montenegro (R-Dist. 13, Litchfield)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAJORITY LEADER STEVE MONTENEGRO TO FAST TRACK AMERICAN CIVICS ACT LEGISLATION

*If Signed into Law, Arizona Would Be First State Requiring High School Students to
Pass Test to Graduate*

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX (Jan. 14, 2015) – In an effort to ensure Arizona high school graduates have a basic understanding of United States civics and history, and on the first day of Arizona's legislative session, Arizona State House of Representatives Majority Leader Steve Montenegro introduced [HB 2064](#) the American Civics Act legislation.

If signed into law, the legislation would be implemented in the 2016-17 school year and require all Arizona High School students take and pass the US Citizenship Civics test with a 60 percent or better grade as a condition for graduation. This is the very same test that newly naturalized immigrants are required to take, in order to become U.S. Citizens. Students will be able to take the test at any time throughout their high school careers, and as many times as necessary to pass. A well-established test that has free study materials is already available online, so there would be no additional cost to the schools or taxpayers. Schools would be allowed to administer it as they see fit.

“As stated by former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, and mentioned by Governor Doug Ducey in his state-of-the-state address, civics deficiency is the ‘quiet crisis’ in education,” said House Majority Leader Steve Montenegro. “I anticipate working alongside Governor Ducey and my fellow legislators on both sides of the aisle to make this bill the first piece of legislation signed into law, and making Arizona the first state in the country with such a requirement for high school graduation.”

According to the Pew Research Center, studies of high school students in Arizona showed less than a five percent passage rate on the United States Citizenship Civics test. According to United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, which administers the test as part of the naturalization process, 92 percent of immigrants who take the test pass it on their first try.

The Citizenship Civics test would consist of 100 basic questions about American civics and history. Some examples include:

- What is the name of the President of the United States now?
- Name one branch or part of the government.
- What is the capital of your state?
- Who is the Commander-in-Chief of the US Military?

Twelve other states are working towards similar legislative efforts. To view the United States Citizenship Civics test mentioned above, please click [here](#).

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